

Regional Resource Governance in West Africa

Responsible mineral supply chains for sustainable development

Project name	Regional Resource Governance in West Africa
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Co-funded by the European Union (EU)
Project Region	Mano River Union Member States: Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone
Budget	€6,700,000 BMZ + €3,000,000 EU
Duration	January 2023 – December 2025
Phases	3 rd phase for Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea 5 th phase for Liberia and Sierra Leone

partner governments are trying to turn raw materials into engines for long-term development. The focus is on the transparency of supply chains and their alignment with the principles of sustainability. The project makes important contributions to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular to End Poverty (SDG 1), to Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8), to Responsible Production and Consumption (SDG 12), to the Environment and Climate Action (SDG 13), to Justice, Peace and strong Institutions (SDG 16) and to Partnerships (SDG 17).



The Challenge

In the four countries of the Mano River Union (MRU), Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, the extractive sector – especially the mining of bauxite, iron ore, gold and diamonds – holds great potential for growth. It is essential to the livelihoods of many people and has the potential to contribute to economic growth, industrialization, and sustainable development.

However, the sector in the MRU Region is still confronted with social conflicts, environmentally harmful mining methods, human rights violations, insufficient civil society participation, non-transparent revenue management and systemic corruption. Controlling mining and smuggling of gold and diamonds from artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) is particularly challenging. Customs and border officials have little knowledge of mineral resources and illegal transport mechanisms across national borders. In sum, mineral supply chains from the region tend to be opaque and do not fully meet environmental and social standards, which in turn poses challenges for importers of raw materials who are increasingly obligated to identify, assess, and manage risks in their mineral supply chains.

Against this background, and with the support of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH,

Our Approach

The project advises key actors in the partner countries on how to make mineral supply chains more transparent and socially and ecologically responsible by improving the institutional and legal framework governing the sector. The partner organisations include government institutions at the regional, national and local level, civil society organisations and the private sector.

Our approach combines strengthening the capacities of individuals, institutions and networks with technical and policy advice. The work of the project is structured in three fields:

1. Strengthening the capacity of relevant national authorities to enforce governance, environmental and social standards in the mining sector and its supply chains, including aspects of traceability and prevention of illicit financial flows.
2. Supporting civil society actors in establishing and using tools to register complaints and finding solutions to sustainability problems in the mining sector.
3. Strengthening the capacities of government and civil society actors to make revenues from the extractive sector transparent and accountable.



Large-scale mining as well as artisanal and small-scale mining have the potential to reduce poverty through increased tax revenues and job creation. At the same time, they pose a risk to the livelihoods of affected communities, the environment and good governance.



Results achieved so far

- In **all four countries**, the tax authorities have increased their capacity to audit mining companies. This has resulted in additional tax revenue totalling €62 million in the past project phase.
- The mining authorities in **Sierra Leone and Liberia** are further developing and expanding their digital cadastre system so that the chain of custody, or in the case of Liberia also licence payments via mobile money, can be mapped and published.
- The project continues to support the **four MRU member states** in implementing a regional approach to the Kimberley Process for diamond certification and anti-smuggling through the facilitation of regular meetings of stakeholders from civil society, state and the private sector.
- The project trained about 80 representatives from mining ministries, law enforcement, civil society and the private sector on the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals and the EU Conflict Minerals Regulation. Participants of the training have transferred this knowledge to their peers and other stakeholders, such as traditional chiefs in **Côte d'Ivoire**. In **Sierra Leone**, as a result of the training-of-trainers a total of 55 people, comprising national civil society actors, mining sector regulators, and law enforcement agencies and three ASM communities, were sensitised to environmental, health, safety and social standards.
- In **Liberia**, 68 inspectors from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Ministry of Mines were trained in the practical application of inspection guidelines in three ASM areas. The aim is to create practical cooperation between the two institutions in order to improve compliance with environmental regulations in the mining sector. In **Côte d'Ivoire**, the mining administration, the environmental agency and the anti-pollution agency are collaborating on improving standardised audits in the ASM and semi-industrial sector. Twelve officials have further been trained on mine closure and rehabilitation.
- A database for processing data from environmental and social audits was developed in **Guinea** to ensure compliance with environmental and social standards. Eight users from the Ministry of Environment were trained to use and maintain the digital tool. The project accompanied three joint audits with the Ministries of Mines and Environment.
- In **Sierra Leone and Liberia** the project provides grants in support of ASM associations and cooperatives in order to formalise artisanal gold mining and enhance compliance with safety and environmental standards.
- The project trained more than 130 law enforcement officers in the main cities and at the borders on fraud detection and prosecution measures.
- Over 1000 border community members (30% women) have been sensitized on the negative impact of minerals smuggling throughout the **region**. A total of 16 anti-smuggling committees have been established at the borders to continue this activity and to serve as link between the communities and law enforcement agencies for timely information sharing.
- More than 40 representatives of civil society, private sector, academia, and the media participated in a joint workshop to develop recommendations for the ongoing mining code revision in **Côte d'Ivoire**. The responsible authorities received the recommendations which will now inform the deliberation on the new mining code.
- In **Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia**, about 1000 community members have been sensitized on mining sector impacts, their participation rights, as well as complaints and solutions mechanisms that are being set up with the support of the project in the **four countries**.
- Supported by the project, a consortium of five CSOs collected data on complaints in selected **Guinean** mining communities over a period of six months. The findings served as a basis for two multi-stakeholder dialogue forums with over 200 participants in mining communities. The objective of these dialogues is to jointly find solutions and agreements in order to prevent or settle community-level conflicts.

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